

A MYSTICAL NUMBER.

OMNIPRESENT SEEMS TO BE THE
FATEFUL SEVEN.From the Biblical Story of the Creation
Down to It Plays a Mighty Part
In Folklore, Tradition, Supersti-
tion and History.Clean birds by seven,
Unclean by twos,
The dove in the heavens
Is the one that I choose.But not only do the bird auguries go
by sevens; the number plays a mighty
part in folklore, tradition and his-
tory. Six days made the world, and
God rested on the seventh day and
hallowed it. In the seventh month Noah's
ark touched the ground; in seven days
a dove was sent out on the face of the
waters. Abraham pleaded with God
seven times for Sodom's sake before
God smote the city of wickedness to
her undoing.Seven days Jacob mourned for Joseph
and would not be comforted; seven
years and seven Jacob served for
Rachel, and in Joseph's governorship
of Egypt the chief butler and baker
dreamed dreams wherein seven fat
oxen and seven lean oxen, seven ears
of full corn and seven ears of withered
corn played a prominent part and
foreboded the 14 years of plenty and
of famine that were in store for the Land
of the Two Crowns, even the land of the
house of bondage, the land of Egypt.Every seventh day the law was read
to the wandering children of Israel, and
Jericho, the strong city, fell, wall and
tower, when seven men had paced
around it for seven days.Solomon was seven years building
the splendid temple, with all its
glories of gold and cedar wood, tur-
quoise and terebinth. There were seven
lamps in the tabernacle, and the
golden candlestick had seven
branches.Naaman washed himself seven
times in the river Jordan before the
healing water cleansed him of his lep-
rosy. The Apocalypse is full of the
mystic number, and on the cross our
Saviour hung for seven hours, and
from the cross our Saviour spoke sev-
en times.The seventh son of a seventh son is
a born doctor, according to Irish belief,
but he must never take money for the
cures he achieves, and to insure re-
covery he should be sought before sun-
rise or after sunset on Friday. "It
is manifest by experience that the sev-
enth male child, by just order (never
a wench being born between), doth
heal only with touching, through a
natural gift, the king's evil; which is
a special gift of God, given to kings
and queens, as daily experience doth
witness." There were seven wise
men and seven wonders of the world;
while the ancients not only noted the
importance of seven as an astronomi-
cal period, but also connected the sev-
en planets then known with the seven
planets and the seven colors.Thus copper belonged to Venus, and
the color green; lead to Saturn, and
the color blue; gold and yellow to the
sun, and so on.The seven days of the week are con-
nected with the seven planets, of
whom the seventh is a lost star, and
the seventh wave of a series is full of
danger to ships, as every seventh year
is to man. For seven years the mis-
chievous sprite, Friar Rush, lived with
the Seeland monks, beguiling the time
by cutting oak cudgels, which, when
struck on the ground, turned into sol-
diers armed cap-a-pie, and for seven
years Prince Charming looks for his
lost bride, or Cap-o'-Rushes works dis-
guised in the kitchens of the palace, or
the forsaken princess tries to climb the
glass mountain which lies between her
and her lover, who has drunk of the
water of forgetfulness. The seven
sleepers are famous, and the number
seven even comes into the employ of
folk medicine. Water taken from sev-
en streams where cresses grow will
cure the jaundice, and seven twigs of
aspens put under the patient's pillow
will recover him from paralysis, and
seven leaves of ivy will bring a care-
less lover back to your side and keep
him there, and seven corns of wheat,
eaten fasting, will heal you of the fall-
ing sickness, which is epilepsy, and
seven mistletoe berries put in a bag of
red silk and hung round your neck will
protect you from sunstroke and elf bolt
and preserve your feet from blisters,
however far you walk.It is not spring until you can put
your foot on seven daisies at one and
the same time, and seven hairs will
keep the evil eye off children, accord-
ing to an old Indian superstition, only
the hairs, to be of any avail, must be
plucked from the tail of an elephant—
a difficult, a delicate and even a dan-
gerous proceeding. At 7 years old all
cats become possessed of witch's pow-
ers, and woe betide those who ill use
or frighten puss when once she has ac-
quired power of mischief! But let us
not discourage the lovers of the nine
lived-one, for—Wherever the cat of the house don't lack
For seven years blow white, blow black,
The asses of lovers shall have no lack.Seven years of ill fortune, according to
a Sicilian superstition, follow her
or him who kills a cat; therefore it were
well to treat your feline followers gen-
tly, even though you love them not. But
I might go on till the "seventh day
from Latter Lammas" and still have
something to tell. So here I make an
end.—Nora Hopper in Illustrated Lon-
don News.Mr. P. Ketcham, of Pike City, Cal.,
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